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men. The government of the United States has already, in three memorable instances, submitted matters of difference with other nations to the arbitration of friendly powers—in two of them, with results effectual to the settlement of the differences submitted.

I must be permitted to add an expression of the sense I entertain of the great value of the efforts of the friends of peace, through the organization of peace societies, in dispelling the delusion so long prevalent in regard to war,—exposing the anti-Christian principles on which it has so long rested, and showing the extent to which it has paralyzed the industry, wasted the wealth, corrupted the morals, brutalized the passions, blasted the hopes, and vitally injured the highest interests of men. The result, thus far, of the quiet and persevering efforts of these associations, has furnished a most gratifying illustration of the silent power of truth, in the hands of Christian benevolence, to reform and save the world.

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#### THE MILITIA SYSTEM.

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##### A Militia Captain "in a Fix."

Everybody knows, or ought to know, that the citizens of this goodly city are not so immersed in the cares of money-making, that they deny themselves that privilege which is esteemed so valuable in other sections of the republic. They find time to be patriotic even in New York. That glorious proof of the sovereignty of the people, the "fall training," is not yet obsolete among us. In all our public squares during the last week in September, our citizen-soldiery, armed with muskets or broom-sticks, as best suits their individual tastes, learn the art of war, under the command of a brave captain in motley, to the admiration of a crowd of ragged newsboys and other irreverent spectators.

Our friend Thomas Van Rensselaer, a colored man, received a notice to attend one of these glorious gatherings. Of course it was a mistake, as the citizens of his color are excused by the philanthropy of our laws from doing any of this sort of service. In cases of actual necessity the State will permit them to enjoy the privilege of being shot, but can in nowise put them to the inconvenience of any previous preparation. But Thomas Van Rensselaer, ever ready to obey the call of his country, borrowed bayonet and belt, musket and cartridge-box, and armed and equipped as the law directs, appeared at the appointed hour on the Battery.

In bearing and equipment he was as tall and as good-looking a grenadier as one would wish to see, and he took his position accordingly in the front rank with his fellow-soldiers. There was a movement in the ranks, and the crowd around them—that just perceptible rustle, rather felt than seen, which denotes in an assembly that something unusual and interesting has happened—when he made his appearance. It was doubtless an involuntary acknowledgement of the honor which one exempt from the toils and the glories alike of military life, had done them by thus promptly signifying his willingness to share in their perils. But the captain, mindful of the humanity of our just laws, and unwilling to impose upon the new recruit the duty of serving his country when there was little probability of his gaining the honor of a bullet or a bayonet through him, which under other circumstances she would be willing to bestow, beckoned him aside.

"Did you receive a warning to train?" asked the captain.

"Yes, Sir," replied Van Rensselaer, giving his name and residence.

"Ah! yes," said the other, "I remember. But there is some mistake."

"None at all, Sir; I have the notice in my pocket."

"Hem! yes. But you are not obliged to train."

"Oh! I know that, Sir; but I am a good citizen, and am willing to serve the State in any capacity."

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"Oh! no doubt, no doubt. But—but—the fact is, the laws do not oblige colored men to do military duty."

"Very true, Sir; but is there any law against it?"

"No—not e-x-a-c-t-ly. But—"

"Very well, Sir, I choose to train. I have received your notice, and here I am all ready for service. The law doesn't oblige me to train,—neither does it prohibit me. I prefer to do it."

"Yes, I see, I see. But I will excuse you."

"I don't want to be excused, Sir."

"Well, I had *rather* excuse you."

"You are very kind; but I haven't the slightest objection to training. It wont take us a great while, will it, Sir?"

"Oh! it will take us an hour or so."

"Well, Sir, I'll train. I can spare the time."

"But I don't want you to."

"But I had *rather*—"

"Well, I *insist*—"

"That I must not?"

"Yes."

"You wont let me?"

"No."

So private Van Rennselaer having carried his point, of *being denied* the *privilege* of making a fool of himself according to the statute, because he was colored, shouldered his musket, gave his unwilling commander a military salute, and marched off the field with the honors of war. The redoubtable captain relieved his bosom by a heavy sigh of its pent-up emotion, and as he wiped the cold sweat from his brow, thanked God that he was relieved from the most dangerous foe that in all his military experience he had ever encountered.

I have related the occurrence, as nearly as I can recollect, precisely as it occurred. In justice to Mr. Van Rennselaer, I should add, lest the case be misunderstood, that his only motive was to test the strength of the prejudice against color.—*A. S. Standard.*

#### Beauties of the Militia System.

Two or three fools, a Bible and a rum bottle constitute a Court Martial, and the decisions of this court are final. The collector can seize property or persons, and he does both. He has power which no other officer of the law possesses in the State of New York, that of depriving a man of his liberty for debt. Under this law, enforced so rigorously, the most atrocious outrages have been committed. These last must be repealed; their enforcement is as oppressive as useless, and as useless as absurd. If war came tomorrow, not twenty of the whole squad of officers, who amuse the juveniles by riding with ludicrous solemnity through our streets, would be retained in the service. Not twenty of the entire lot are competent to meet in fight an army of their own species, ring-tailed baboons armed with cocoa-nuts.

*Evening Star.*

#### Piermont Muster.

So much for the bright side of the day's picture; but unfortunately there was another side—a dark one—"black as ink" literally, exhibitions of wild excess on the part of a portion of the assembled multitude, rude blasphemy—beastly drunkenness and other immoralities that were enough to make good men shudder at the name of muster, and convince the most incredulous of the utterly prostrating effects of such gatherings upon public morals and the good of the community. We have never in our experience, we believe, seen so much drunkenness on any similar occasion in this State—never on *any* occasion saw so many rational beings transformed into babbling idiots

and fierce madmen through the power of that vile stuff, called rum. More than one of these wretched creatures we saw stretched out by the roadside, helpless, retaining only the power of muttering the rude oath and obscene jest, and exhibiting a spectacle of loathsome degradation which might well make the very beasts of the fields bellow. Now if such must be the accompanying scenes to these military exhibitions, God forbid that there should ever be another in our State. If these yearly displays can be only continued by exhibiting to our young men, the children of our citizens, such immorality—such scenes of loathsome depravity, every friend of peace and good morals in community ought to rise, at once, and put them down as public nuisances. If quarrelling, fighting, and drinking in the wildest excess, are to be among the prominent lessons taught the children and youth of our State on these occasions, they certainly furnish very strong arguments in favor of a thorough modification, to say the least, of our present militia system. The elements of disorder, crime and all manner of lawlessness are already strong enough in our midst, without keeping up a system at an enormous public expense, the direct tendency of which is to fret them into seven fold violence, and open a wider field for their operations.—*Herald of Freedom.*

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**The Finery of War.**

Halt! Attention! Present arms! One man speaks the words, and, as if by mechanism, a thousand men obey him. Yes! look down the column, that long extended line of red and white, crowned by steel and feathers. Every limb, every muscle, move like limbs and muscles directed by one mind, and yet there are a thousand minds, a thousand wills, a thousand hearts throbbing with manhood's feelings and emotions, yet all curbed, checked, pent up, giving no outward mark of their presence more than if they were naught, than if the flesh and nerves which clothe them were so much steel and brass. It is a great thing to see machinery imitating man, lever and crank aping muscle and sinew; but it is too great a thing to see a man imitating machinery, muscle and sinew aping lever and crank. Attention! 'Tis a serried rank, compact, regular as a mathematical diagram. Legs, arms, muskets, sabres; the same lines, the same forms, the same movements, every pulse beating, every eye glancing, but as discipline ordains. Crashing past with ringing arms and trampling horses, a whirling of gaudy trappings, gay plumage and sparkling steel, a body of cavalry flies past. Their array seems more loose, but 'tis in appearance only. The trumpet is their word of the mouth, and not only the men but the brutes they bestride, can interpret the language. To the right, to the left: halt! forward! rings from out the brazen or the silver tube, and the docile steeds and the docile men, equally well disciplined, think as little, the one as the other, of the why and the wherefore, but obey, faultlessly, mechanically obey. And then the loud melody of martial music comes ringing through the air, a spirit-moving strain! A march, a triumphant march, in all its cadences, all its bursts of rich harmony, talking of glory, pomp, and lying while it talks! Why not interpret martial music aright? It might be done. An ear morally tuned might hear amid the breath of melody, mournful, wailing shrieks, such as surgeons shrink from, when the scalpel is deep in the flesh; the lamentations of despairing men and women muttered lowly; a roaring as of burning homes; and anon when the strain ceases, a silence, like the silence of deserted hearths!—*Jerrold's Shilling Magazine.*